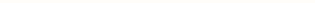


Dave Barr



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I've always been very active, but recently I was feeling sluggish and a little old. I'd get worn out easily. I'm 56 and I was thinking that I couldn't do as much as I used to when I was younger. I love cycling and do "century rides" for the American Diabetes Association — riding a hundred miles in one day — and it was getting harder and harder. I wasn't eating well — I'd fill up on snacks and sugary foods like ice cream and candy and then I wouldn't be hungry at dinner time when my wife, Rosann, had made dinner. I wanted to do something different to try and feel better and more energetic.

I started walking in the woods with Rosann and it's one of my favorite things to do.

We're out in nature, connecting and exercising at the same time; we'll talk about what's going on in our lives. Sometimes my wife will ride her horse, Kibby, and I'll walk along beside them. Most days I'm walking at least 10 miles, and at work I walk a lot as an associate on the floor, helping people.

When I need time alone I walk along the trail near our house.

That's how I relax. It's peaceful with nobody else around. I'll have my thoughts and go somewhere quiet in my mind.

I'm not eating sugary snacks before dinner and enjoying Rosann's great cooking.

She's Italian and makes pasta with white sauce and sausage that I love. We're eating less salt and more veggies like broccoli, cauliflower, and carrots. I'm not going to say I've cut ice cream and cookies out completely, but I've cut down and instead, for snacks during the day I'll have peanuts, fruit, or a low-sugar granola bar.

I'm going on 30-mile bike rides and it's exhilarating.

I have more stamina now and I challenge myself to get up the next hill or complete the next mile. I love being out on the open road with no cell phone or computer. It's great to sometimes discover a road I've not ridden before and see what is around the next corner.



I'll motivate myself saying: "I got up the hill; now the easy part, going downhill." And I'll tell myself: "You've got to make it back home because you're not calling anybody to come and get you!" My goal is to ride a thousand miles a year. Also, I bought a tandem, so my wife and I can ride together which is fun.

Rosann and I like to watch T.V. together, like The History Channel and reruns of M*A*S*H.

But I don't just sit on the couch — I'll walk in place or do jumping jacks. And before bed we both do a series of stretching exercises to relax, which helps us sleep better.

I'm volunteering at our church as an usher.

I helped Rosann with a big charity spaghetti dinner she was organizing for 800 people. We cooked pasta and made meatballs. And I helped with the clean-up. It was a lot of work, but I have more energy and was happy to do it. The way I look at it: "Hey, you can't just take, you've got to give back too."

I'm grateful for my relationship with Rosann.

The other day we were out in the woods, looking at all the trees and the sky above, not worrying about the struggles in life. I was thinking: "Who knows what could happen in the future? Hey, I'm with my wife, here we are in God's creation." You've got to appreciate each moment and be thankful for what you have.



THRIVE